Character Education as Prevention

Survey of Key K-12 Stakeholders in Wyoming

WYSAC

Character Education as Prevention:

Survey of Key K-12 Stakeholders in Wyoming

By

Brianna Chavez, M.A., Assistant Research Scientist

With the assistance of
Dr. Rodney Wambeam, Senior Research Scientist
Eric Canen, M.A., Center for Health and Education Studies Manager
Dr. Timothy Pearson, Assistant Research Scientist

Wyoming Survey & Analysis Center
University of Wyoming • Dept. 3925
1000 East University Avenue • Laramie, WY 82071
wysac@uwyo.edu • http://wysac.uwyo.edu

(307) 766-2189 • Fax: (307) 766-2759

Table of Contents

Table of Tables

1. Executive Summary

This report presents the Wyoming State Epidemiological Outcomes Workgroup (SEOW) with findings from a survey of K-12 system stakeholders in Wyoming completed by the Wyoming Survey & Analysis Center (WYSAC). Findings from the companion literature review informed the content of the survey. The survey was designed to inventory current practices in character education in Wyoming.

1.1 Companion Literature Review[1]

Results from the companion document, a focused review of evidence-based character education programs, reveal three overarching findings. Character education programs can be effective as prevention programs, especially when there is overlap with other prevention programs, when implemented among young children (pre-k to first grade), among economically disadvantaged youth, and when implemented with program fidelity. Results from the survey of key stakeholders in the Wyoming K-12 public school system indicate the following:

- The majority of Wyoming school districts have some type of character education program in place;
- Bullying prevention programs currently seem to be the most commonly implemented programs;
- Time, money, and other resource considerations are a challenge to character education implementation;
- Prevention programming varies from school to school;
- Support for character education (among faculty, parents, and communities) seems to vary greatly across the state.

1.2 Study Goals

In accordance with the goals and objectives of the newly revised SEOW charter, the goals of the study as a whole were to:

- conduct a thorough review of scholarly literature defining and detailing the effectiveness of character education programs;
- conduct statewide surveys of key school district personnel about existing character education programs in Wyoming; and
- produce a technical report summarizing survey findings and providing recommendations based on findings from the literature review and survey results.

1.3 Recommendations

Taken together, our analyses of the findings suggest:

- the State should make funds available to implement evidence-based character education programs for districts with large proportions of economically disadvantaged youth;
- fund early childhood (pre-k to 1st grade) classrooms statewide; and
- provide funds to school districts with substantive support for evidence-based character education programs.

[1]WYSAC. (2013). *Character education: A focused review of the literature,* by B.L. Chavez, T.M. Pearson, R. Wambeam & E. Canen. (WYSAC Technical Report No. CHES-1348). Laramie, WY: Wyoming Survey & Analysis Center, University of Wyoming.

2. Introduction

This report presents the Wyoming State Epidemiological Outcomes Workgroup (SEOW) with findings from a survey of key administrators in the Wyoming K-12 system completed by the Wyoming Survey & Analysis Center (WYSAC). The purpose of the survey research is to assess and inventory the presence of character education programs in primary and secondary schools in Wyoming. WYSAC will use the information gained from the needs assessment to identify gaps in current programming and will make recommendations for filling those gaps. This assessment will inform state agencies, service providers, policy makers, and other stakeholders about Wyoming's needs related to character education.

2.1 Purpose of the SEOW

The SEOW is a program of the Wyoming Department of Health (WDH) directed by the WDH Public Health Division (PHD). It is comprised of representatives from

- Wyoming Department of Health;
- Wyoming Department of Education;
- Wyoming Division of Criminal Investigation;
- Wyoming Department of Family Services;
- Wyoming Board of Pharmacy;
- Tribal services from the Arapaho and Shoshoni Tribes;
- community prevention providers; and
- researchers from the University of Wyoming, WYSAC.

The SEOW's charter is to provide guidance and information regarding the available data associated with substance abuse and mental health issues throughout the state. In particular, the SEOW is responsible for gathering, reporting, and disseminating information regarding substance abuse and mental health data in Wyoming. It also serves as a decision-making body regarding the deliverables for the SEOW grant. The SEOW helps determine directions to pursue, review results, and make recommendations.

Its support comes from the WDH and a grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

In performance of its duty as the data body recommending best-practices in substance abuse prevention in the State of Wyoming, the SEOW determined that Character Education is worth exploring as an option for evidence-based prevention.

2.2 Organization of the Report

This document contains 11 sections. Sections 1 and 2 provide an executive summary and an introduction, respectively. Section 3 explains the methodology used in the study. Section 4 presents findings from the survey. Section 5 discusses the successes and challenges of character development discussed by key stakeholders. Section 6 provides a summary of responses to the questions posed by respondents. Section 7 provides a discussion about the findings. Section 8 provides recommendations to the State emerging from the study. Section 9 lists the references cited in the findings.

Additionally, Sections 10 and 11 include two appendices. Appendix A contains the questionnaire provided to respondents. Appendix B provides all open-ended responses to the survey.

"CHARACTER EDUCATION IS WORTH EXPLORING AS AN OPTION FOR EVIDENCE-BASED PREVENTION."

3. Methodology

3.1 Survey of Key K-12 Stakeholders in Wyoming

Generally, prevention and character education efforts aim to develop resilient youth who experience healthy outcomes such as low rates of substance abuse and positive mental health outcomes. The objectives of this exploratory study were to inventory and assess the scope of existing character education efforts in the Wyoming K-12 school system.

3.2 Questionnaire Development

The questionnaire was developed to provide insight about the scope and availability of character education programs in the Wyoming K-12 school system. WYSAC developed the questionnaire using findings from the companion literature review.[2] Findings from the literature review recommend that schools implement evidence-based programs, programs that begin in early childhood, and programs targeted toward disadvantaged youth. Thus, questions in the survey were designed to determine what specific programs are currently in use, and the extent to which programs that fall into those three categories have been implemented.

3.3 Survey Administration

Wyoming's State Epidemiological Outcomes Workgroup (SEOW) selected 52 respondents based on their ability to comment knowledgeably on existing programs and activities for character education in Wyoming. A member of the SEOW and employee of the Wyoming Department of Education, with specific knowledge on who in the school districts has the necessary knowledge to respond to the survey, provided WYSAC with a list of key gatekeepers for WYSAC to contact. Prior to providing the list to WYSAC, the member contacted key gatekeepers via telephone and/or email to discuss the study to facilitate buy-in. One week prior to the first round of invitations to participate, the Wyoming Department of Education sent out a memo to all school districts formally notifying and informing them about the study. After one week, WYSAC emailed the identified contacts, asking them if they would be willing to complete an electronic questionnaire for the study. Participants were sent an electronic link to access the survey. For those who had not yet responded, weekly reminders were emailed until the conclusion of the study.

3.3.1 Respondent Pool and Response Rates

A total of 39 surveys were completed with key programming staff at Wyoming K-12 schools. Of all eligible participants, the overall response rate was 78.2%. Non-probability purposive sampling was used in pool recruitment; thus, there are no sampling margins of error to report.

3.3.2 Data Compilation and Analysis

Upon completion of data collection, the data set was exported from the Qualtrics survey system to IBM SPSS Statistics package for analysis. The dataset was used to generate descriptive statistics and frequency tables. Open-ended responses were content analyzed for repetitions in responses.

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[2]WYSAC. (2013). *Character education: A focused review of the literature,* by B.L. Chavez, T.M. Pearson, R. Wambeam & E. Canen. (WYSAC Technical Report No. CHES-1348). Laramie, WY: Wyoming Survey & Analysis Center, University of Wyoming.

4. Findings

The following nine sections present general results to survey items. The first section (4.1.) presents a discussion of general character education programs in place throughout the state as well as relevant open-ended comments pertaining to such programs. In sections 4.2 through 4.4 we review programs designed to reduce specific behaviors. In sections 4.5 through 4.7 we present generalized character education programs. Finally, in section 4.9 we present open-ended questions and comments.

4.1 Character Education Programs in Schools

Respondents were asked whether their schools "currently have what [they] consider to be character education programs in place." Respondents were provided with the following definition of character education for the purpose of this study:

- Character education refers to programs and curricula designed to promote positive decision-making through the development of the six pillar virtues (respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, trustworthiness, and citizenship).

Table 1. Respondents Indicating their Schools Currently Have Character Education Programs

	Frequency	Valid %
Yes	24	64.9%
No	12	32.4%
Don't know / not sure	1	2.7%
Total Valid	**37**	**100%**
No answer	2	
Total	**39**	

4.1 Character Education Programs in Schools

Respondents who indicated their schools had character education programs were asked to list the programs currently in their schools. Below, in Table 2, we present programs reported to be in use in Wyoming K-12 classrooms.

Table 2. Character Education Programs Listed

	Frequency	Valid %
Character Counts!	4	16.7%
8 Keys of Excellence	4	16.7%
Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS)	4	16.7%
Pillars of Character	2	8.3%
Second Step	2	8.3%
Town Hall Programs	1	4.2%
21 CCLC	1	4.2%
Why Try	1	4.2%
Cowboy Ethics	1	4.2%
Go For It K-5	1	4.2%
BEST	1	4.2%
ABC's of Behavior	1	4.2%
My Blog Series	1	4.2%
Olweus Bullying Prevention	1	4.2%
Rachel's Challenge	1	4.2%
Safe Schools Ambassadors	1	4.2%
Lion's Quest	1	4.2%
School Connect	1	4.2%
We are a Leader in Me: 7 Habits of Highly Effective People	1	4.2%
Guidance classes	1	4.2%
Internally developed course modeled from Positive Education Initiative	1	4.2%
Two or more of the above listed programs	9	37.5%
Don't know / not sure	1	4.2%
Total Valid	**24**	**100%**
No answer	0	
Total	**24**	

4.2 Outcome-Centered Programs to Prevent or Reduce Problem Behaviors

To determine the extent to which programs with overlapping prevention curricula have been implemented in Wyoming school districts, we asked a series of questions about whether schools had specific outcome-centered programs in place. Below, in Table 3, we present the number of respondents who indicated their school, "currently has a program in place to prevent or reduce tobacco use."

Table 3. Respondents Indicating their Schools Currently Have Programs to Prevent or Reduce Tobacco Use

	Frequency	Valid %
Yes	26	68.4%
No	12	31.6%
Don't know / not sure	0	0.0%
Total Valid	**38**	**100%**
No answer	1	
Total	**39**	

Consistent with responses about the presence of tobacco prevention/reduction programs in schools, Table 4 shows the percentages of stakeholders indicating their schools currently have programs to prevent or reduce alcohol use. In both instances, over two thirds of respondents indicated such programs were currently in place.

Numerous prevention and character education programs

Table 4. Respondents Indicating their Schools Currently

	Frequency	Valid %
Yes	30	78.9%
No	8	21.1%
Don't know / not sure	0	0.0%
Total Valid	**38**	**100%**
No answer	1	
Total	**39**	

aim at least in part to reduce susceptibility to aggressive behaviors among youth by building resilient children (Berkowitz, 2000; Coie et al., 1993). Thus, key stakeholders were asked to indicate whether their schools currently have programs to prevent or reduce aggressive behaviors.

As seen in Table 5, over three quarters of respondents indicated their schools currently have programs to prevent or reduce aggressive behaviors.

As discussed in the companion literature review of character education, some programs demonstrate hopeful results for reducing bullying behaviors through curriculum

Table 5. Respondents Indicating their Schools Currently Have Programs to Prevent or Reduce Aggressive

	Frequency	Valid %
Yes	28	73.7%
No	9	23.7%
Don't know / not sure	1	2.6%
Total Valid	**38**	**100%**
No answer	1	
Total	**39**	

combining improvement of school environment, pro-social behavior, and improved academic performance (Sojourner, 2012). The overwhelming majority (91.9%) of respondents indicated their schools currently have programs to prevent or reduce bullying.

Table 6. Respondents Indicating their Schools Currently Have Programs to Prevent or Reduce Bullying

	Frequency	Valid %
Yes	34	89.5%
No	4	10.5%
Don't know / not sure	0	0.0%
Total Valid	**38**	**100%**
No answer	1	
Total	**39**	

4.3 Soft Skills Programs

The existing literature suggests that we develop positive decision-making in youth by developing resilient youth who have the appropriate personality, goals, and motivations to make positive decisions. Thus, respondents were told, "Soft skills include personality traits, goals and motivations," and were asked if their schools currently have a program in place to teach soft skills. Table 7 demonstrates that slightly over half indicated having a program in place to teach soft skills.

Respondents who indicated their schools did not currently have programs in place that teach soft skills were also asked if their schools have future plans to implement such programs. Table 8 shows that the majority of respondents whose schools do not currently have programs to teach soft skills either have no plans or do not know if their schools have plans to implement such a program in the future.

Table 7. Respondents Indicating their Schools Currently Have Programs to Teach Soft Skills in Place

	Frequency	Valid %
Yes	21	55.3%
No	13	34.2%
Don't know / not sure	4	10.5%
Total Valid	**38**	**100%**
No answer	1	
Total	**39**	

Table 8. Future Plans to Implement Programs That Teach Soft Skills

	Frequency	Valid %
Yes	4	23.5%
No	6	35.3%
Don't know / not sure	7	41.2%
Total Valid	**17**	**100%**
No answer	22	
Total	**39**	

"WE DEVELOP POSITIVE DECISION-MAKING IN YOUTH BY DEVELOPING RESILIENT YOUTH WHO HAVE THE APPROPRIATE PERSONALITY, GOALS, AND MOTIVATIONS TO MAKE POSITIVE DECISIONS."

4.4 Social and Emotional Learning Programs

Social and emotional learning programs effectively improve social-emotional competence and positive coping skills and boast reductions in anti-social and aggressive behaviors when implemented with pre-school and early elementary school-aged children (Lynch, Geller, & Schmidt, 2004). Thus, respondents were asked to indicate whether their schools currently have programs in place to teach social and emotional learning. Below, in Table 9, we see that almost two-thirds of respondents indicated their schools have such programs in place. Respondents who indicated their schools did not currently have programs in place to teach social and emotional learning were also asked if their schools have future plans to implement such programs. Table 10 shows that the majority of respondents whose schools do not currently have programs to teach social and emotional learning have no plans or do not know if their schools have plans to implement such a program in the future.

Table 9. Respondents Indicating their Schools Have Programs to Teach Social and Emotional Learning in Place

	Frequency	Valid %
Yes	24	64.9%
No	12	32.4%
Don't know / not sure	1	2.7%
Total Valid	**37**	**100%**
No answer	2	
Total	**39**	

Table 10. Future Plans to Implement Programs That Teach Social and Emotional Learning

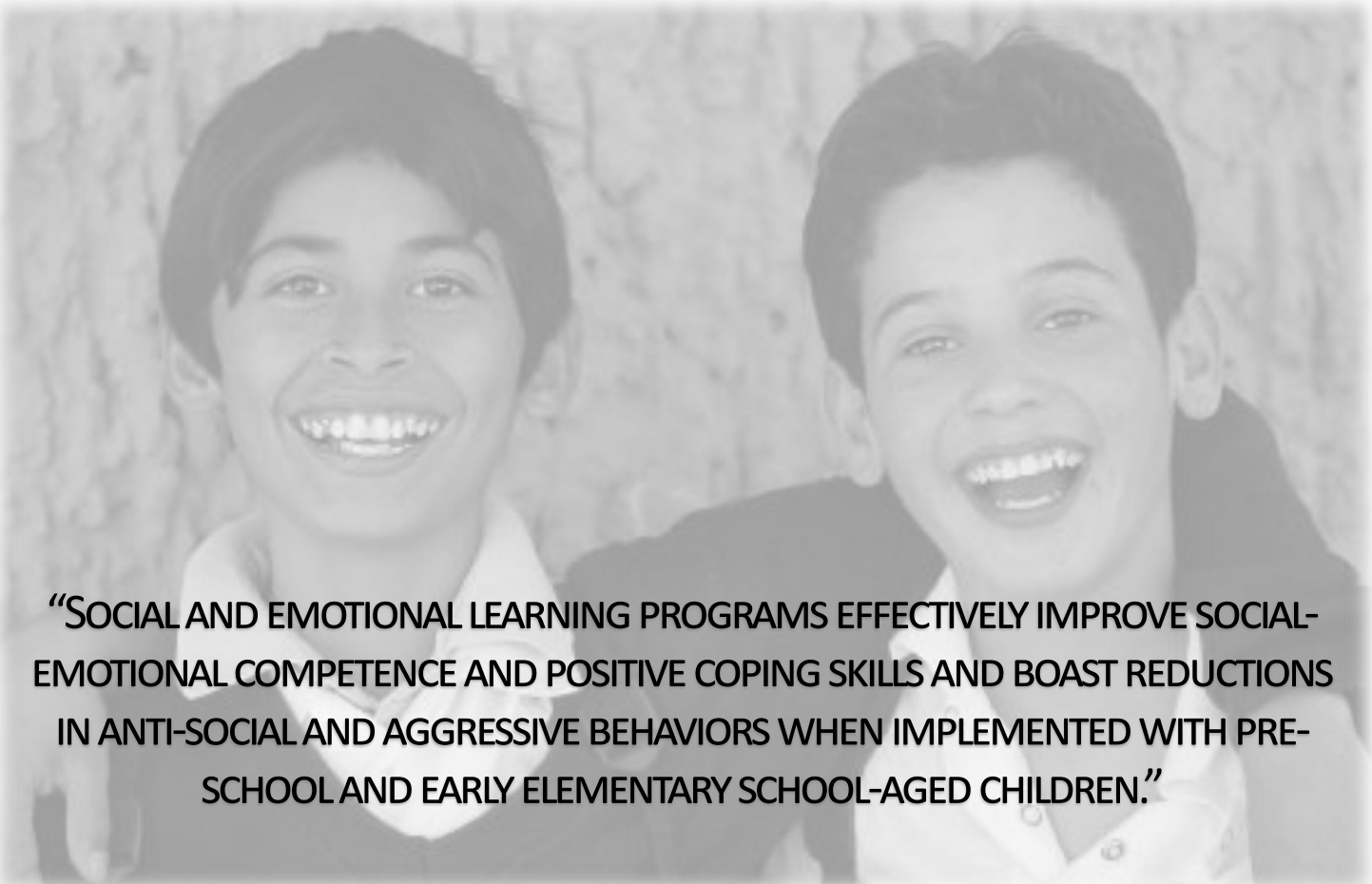|	Frequency	Valid %
Yes	3	23.1%
No	6	46.2%
Don't know / not sure	4	30.8%
Total Valid	**13**	**100%**
No answer	26	
Total	**39**	

"SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING PROGRAMS EFFECTIVELY IMPROVE SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE AND POSITIVE COPING SKILLS AND BOAST REDUCTIONS IN ANTI-SOCIAL AND AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIORS WHEN IMPLEMENTED WITH PRE-SCHOOL AND EARLY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN."

4.5 Service-Learning Programs

To date, rigorous scientific evaluations of service-learning have been somewhat lacking, but limited evidence suggests that such programs are promising for increasing civic engagement, improving academic performance, and reducing involvement in risky behaviors (Billig, 2002). Respondents were given the following definition of service-learning programs and were then asked if they have such programs currently in place:

- Service-learning is a carefully monitored service experience in which a student has intentional learning goals and reflects actively on what he or she has learned throughout the experience.

Table 11 presents the number of respondents who indicated their schools currently have service-learning programs in place. Just less than half of respondents indicated their schools currently have such programs.

Of those who indicated their schools *did not* currently have such a program in place, almost half indicated they *did not know* or *were not sure* if their schools have future plans to implement such a program. Compared to other types of character education programs, service-learning seems to have less prevalence in Wyoming school districts.

Table 12. Future Plans to Implement Programs That Teach

	Frequency	Valid %
Yes	2	9.5%
No	9	42.9%
Don't know / not sure	10	47.6%
Total Valid	**21**	**100%**
No answer	18	
Total	**39**	

Table 11. Respondents Indicating their Schools Currently

	Frequency	Valid %
Yes	16	43.2%
No	18	48.6%
Don't know / not sure	3	8.1%
Total Valid	**37**	**100%**
No answer	2	
Total	**39**	

5. Successes and Challenges in Character Development

5.1 Challenges

A sizeable amount of research suggests that prevention efforts targeting children in early stages of development are most effective, as they are carried out during the developmentally formidable years that provide a foundation for behavioral and health-related domains (Heckman & Kautz, 2013; Lynch, Gellner & Schmidt, 2004). Best practice recommendations from the literature indicate programs for below school-aged children, kindergarten, and early elementary school children are most effective at primary and secondary prevention, compared to programs geared toward middle- and high school-aged youth.

- What challenges does your school face with implementing character education programs?

Four challenge themes emerged from the responses:

1) staff/community/parent buy-in;
2) consistency in implementation;
3) time and resources; and
4) no challenges.

The comprehensive list of responses to this question can be found in Appendix B.

Several stakeholders expressed concerns that teacher, parental, and community buy-in has been and may continue to be a barrier to implementation of character education programs. For instance, one respondent stated, "staff and community perception of these programs," was an ongoing challenge to implementation. Other respondents expressed that "consistency in implementation" posed a challenge to implementing character education programs district-wide. The most commonly reported challenge mentioned by respondents was that demands on teacher time and resources posed difficulties in balancing prevention programming with student instruction time and time for teacher training. Finally, some expressed having no challenges with implementing character education programs, although such response was a minority among the responses. For instance, one respondent indicated their district has already implemented a "behavior-intervention program that addressed the social-emotional needs of all K-12 students."

Although the SEOW is primarily interested in the implementation of evidence-based programs, we recognize the importance of understanding what successes schools believe they are already having with existing efforts. To give respondents the opportunity to recognize existing successes in their schools, they were asked broadly what successes their schools experienced with regard to character development.

5.2 Successes

Successes among the school districts largely fell into one of three categories:

1) improvements in student behavior;
2) perceived success with specific programs; and
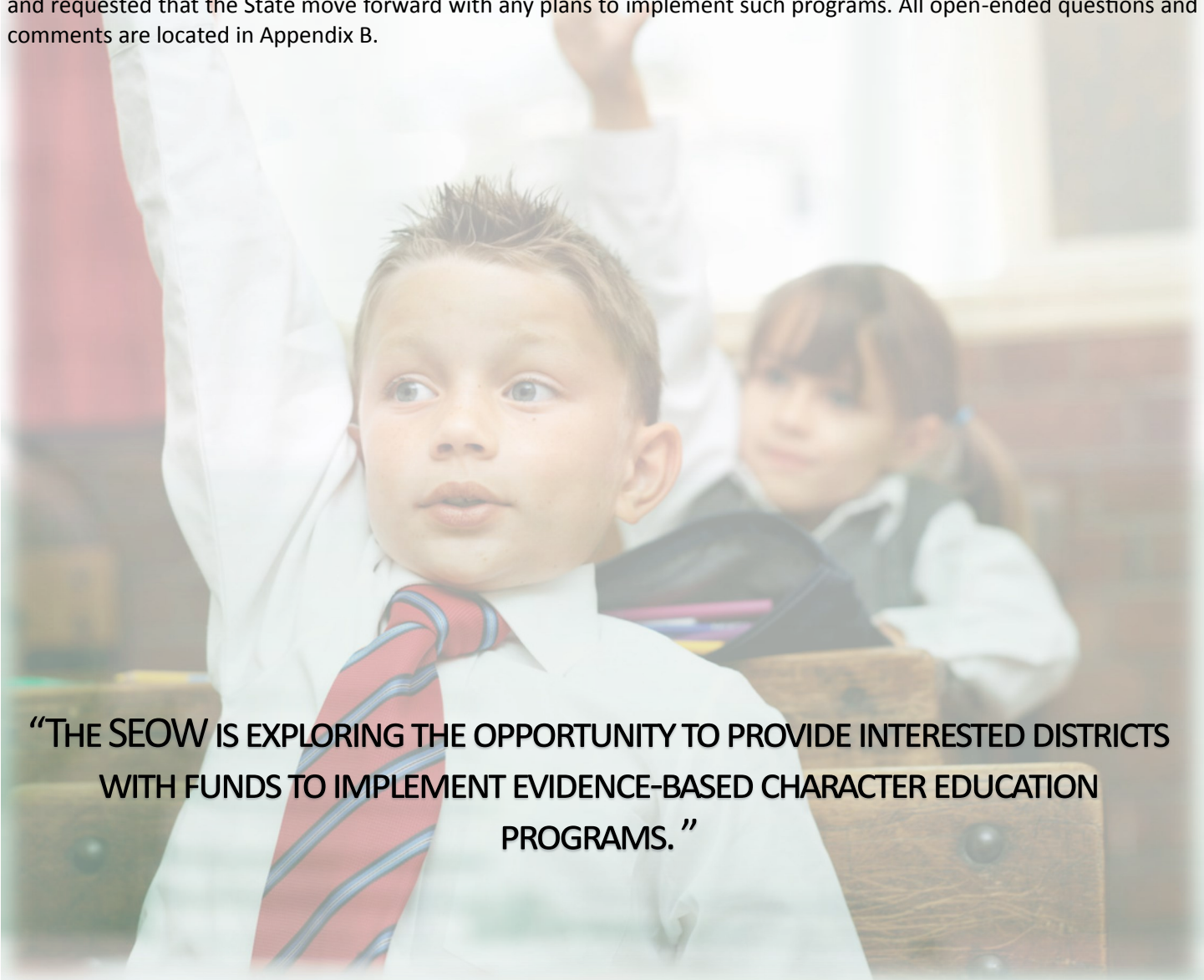3) reinforcement of positive behaviors.

Numerous respondents reported witnessing various improvements in student behavior such as reductions in bullying and referrals, and improvements in attitudes, language and conversations among students; many respondents attributed such improvements to the character education programs. Several respondents also reported positive outcomes from specific programs within their districts. Programs mentioned included the 8 Keys of Excellence, Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support (PBIS), Friends of Rachel, My Blog Series, Olweus, Social-Emotional Learning Program, Safe Schools Healthy Students, and the ABC's of Behavior. Finally, a few respondents believed opportunities to reinforce positive behaviors by integrating character curriculum in the schools have been a positive shift in their school districts. Appendix B contains the comprehensive list of open-ended comments about school successes in character development.

6. Questions and Comments

Respondents were given the opportunity to voice questions and comments at the end of the survey. Questions and comments fell into four categories:

1) training and resources;
2) variability in programming from school to school;
3) Wyoming's plans for character education; and
4) enthusiasm about character education.

First, several respondents commented that their districts do not currently have the training, time, or resources available to them to implement character education in their schools. Similarly, several people asked if such resources are available. To our knowledge, funding for such programs is not yet available statewide. Second, respondents inquired whether such programs would have to be consistent from school to school. The answer is no; the SEOW was exploring the extent to which character education is already occurring in Wyoming schools and investigating evidence-based programs to offer Wyoming school districts that are interested in participating in such programs. Local control of such programming will in no way be altered. Third, several respondents were curious about whether character education was going to become mandatory statewide. Again, the answer is no. The SEOW is exploring the data and research on the effectiveness of character education programs at preventing problem behaviors to provide recommendations and guidance. Finally, a few respondents expressed excitement about character education programs and requested that the State move forward with any plans to implement such programs. All open-ended questions and comments are located in Appendix B.

"THE SEOW IS EXPLORING THE OPPORTUNITY TO PROVIDE INTERESTED DISTRICTS WITH FUNDS TO IMPLEMENT EVIDENCE-BASED CHARACTER EDUCATION PROGRAMS."

7. Discussion

Six overarching findings emerge from the survey and companion literature review. First, the existing literature suggests character education can be effective prevention when evidence-base strategies are used, especially those that crossover as prevention interventions (i.e. ALL STARS). Second, reviews of the literature strongly suggest character education is most effective when programs are implemented in early childhood (pre-k through 1st grade, typically) and when they target disadvantaged populations. Third, survey results indicate the majority of Wyoming school districts are currently implementing character education programming (65%) in some form. Interestingly, most are implementing tobacco prevention programs (70%), alcohol prevention programs (70%) and bullying prevention programs (92%). Fourth, we note that a few respondents pointed out that implementation of character education and prevention programs varies greatly within districts and from school to school. Fifth, some respondents expressed concerns about program buy-in from parents, staff, and the community as a whole. Lastly, respondents suggest that time and resources necessary for implementation of such programs is lacking.

8. Recommendations

As the State of Wyoming moves forward with character education as prevention, we make three recommendations. First, given the vast variability at the school-level in offering character education programs, **the State of Wyoming should provide the resources (funding and training) to specific schools or districts that currently do not implement these programs. Second, we recommend that if prioritizations of such resources becomes necessary, that districts lacking early childhood resources be given first priority with character education funding. Finally, we recommend prioritizing funding to districts that have high proportions of economically disadvantaged youth.**

9. References

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10. Appendix A: Questionnaire

1) For the purpose of this study, character education refers to programs and curricula designed to promote positive decision-making through the development of the six pillar virtues (respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, trustworthiness and citizenship).

    1a. Does your school currently have what you consider to be character education programs in place?
    Yes
    No
    Don't know

    1b. If yes, please list the character education programs currently in your school.

2) Does your school currently have a program(s) in place to prevent or reduce tobacco use?
    Yes
    No
    Don't know/not sure

3) Does your school currently have a program(s) in place to prevent or reduce alcohol use?
    Yes
    No
    Don't know/not sure

4) Does your school currently have a program(s) in place to prevent or reduce aggressive behaviors?
    Yes
    No
    Don't know/not sure

5) Does your school currently have a program(s) in place to prevent or reduce bullying?
    Yes
    No
    Don't know/not sure

6) Soft skills include personality traits, goals, and motivations. Does your school our school currently have a program to teach soft skills?
    Yes
    No
    Don't know/not sure

    6a. If your school does not currently have a program in place to teach soft skills, are there plans to have such a program in the future?
        Yes
        No
        Don't know/not sure
    6b. If your school does not currently have a program in place to teach soft skills, are there plans to have such a program in the future?
        Yes
        No
        Don't know/not sure

7) Social and emotional skills are those which relate to self-awareness, awareness of others, emotion regulation, responsible decision-making, problem-solving, conflict resolution, and building positive relationships. Does your school currently have a program curriculum to build social-emotional skills?

    Yes

    No

    Don't know/not sure

    7a. If your school does not currently have a program in place to teach social-emotional skills, are there plans to have a program such curriculum in the future?

    Yes

    No

    Don't know/not sure

8) Service-learning is a carefully monitored service experience in which a student has intentional learning goals and reflects actively on what he or she has learned throughout the experience. Does your school currently have a service-learning program?

    Yes

    No

    Don't know/not sure

    8a. If your school does not currently have a service-learning program in place, are there plans to implement such a program in the future?

    Yes

    No

    Don't know/not sure

9) In your opinion, what challenges does your school face with implementing character education programs?

10) In your opinion, what success has your school experienced with regard to character development?

11) What questions or comments do you have, if any?

11. Appendix B: Open-Ended Responses

9) In your opinion, what challenges does your school face with implementing character education programs?

- *"Buy in from all."*
- *"Consistency."*
- *"Controversy around the different programs and often the program sponsors. Balancing training with other time and resource demands."*
- *"Draft Legislation prohibiting Character Education."*
- *"Finding a quality program and finding time and money to train staff."*
- *"Finding the right teachers to connect with students to fully engage them."*
- *"Gaining buy-in from high school educators; finding research-based programs; ongoing training of our educators."*
- *"Man Power; time; money."*
- *"Many feel it is not a high school's job to teach those things."*
- *"No comment."*
- *"None; our District has implemented a 3-tiered behavior-intervention program K-12 that addresses the social-emotional needs of all K-12 students. This includes whole school, classroom, small group and individual evidence-based programs."*
- *"Not many, everyone is on board with our current program."*
- *"Staff and community perception of these programs."*
- *"Staffing and time for instruction."*
- *"Sustainability, funding for SRO, funding for programs, consistency in implementation."*
- *"The generation of teachers are from the 'me' generation. Getting them to teach these types of values is tough when they don't practice those values themselves."*
- *"There is great diversity of opinion in this area on the part of parents and educators. It is difficult to put together new programs around character education given time and resource constraints, when all stakeholders are not 'on the same page'".*
- *"Time."*
- *"Time."*
- *"Time and man/women power. May have some parental push back."*
- *"Time and money. It is a struggle to carve out enough time during an academic day for Character Ed. Too many academic pressures and expectations. Staff development is needed, but the $$ priority is always academic."*
- *"Time and resources."*
- *"Time and we already have multiple other programs or class guidance lessons being taught."*
- *"Time to fit it into an already rigorous full school day, staff buy-in to the importance and benefits of such a program."*
- *"Time, personnel, community buy in."*
- *"Time, possibly parent concerns about topic, finding the right people for the job."*
- *"Time...but we manage."*
- *"We do not appear to have any road blocks."*
- *"We do not have time in the schedule to add this important class."*
- *"We lack the time to add programs to our curriculum, Administrators are more worried about AYP....and providing academic interventions."*
- *"Where to implement such programs (ie. regular classroom, during guided reading, etc.). It's easy to implement at the elementary level, but once kids hit middle school it's harder for the guidance counselor to fit that in. Need to look at a way for regular classroom teachers to fit it in to the regular curriculum."*

10) In your opinion, what success has your school experienced with regard to character development?

- *"All members of one school, both students and staff, have been using the 8 Keys of Excellence with great success. Two other schools are all trained in PBIS and having great success."*
- *"Applying the 8 Keys of Excellence to daily school activities and having secondary students mentor and teach the character skills to elementary students. Honoring students who display good character during monthly assemblies."*
- *"Awareness, conversation, resources, trusted adults to go to for help and advice."*
- *"Co-curricular activities have done more to teach students about character development than the curriculum."*
- *"Conversations and behaviors have improved."*
- *"Decreased behavioral referrals; less aggressive bullying; improved attendance."*
- *"Friends of Rachel club for students, bullying has gone down. Teaching students about a culture of respect, cultivation of."*
- *"Great success."*
- *"I feel that our schedule of regular class guidance lessons in each homeroom class for every student has been helpful in teaching character education development."*
- *"I feel the My Blog Series has been a great addition and the mini lessons done beyond that make it a fun activity to learn.*
- *"Implementation of the OLWEUS program."*
- *"It is a definite need."*
- *"No comment."*
- *"Our district has integrated our SEL curriculum at the classroom level taught by all staff. This allows staff to reinforce and utilize a common language."*
- *"Our students are more aware of the importance of building and having good character."*
- *"Our success is more with individuals (teachers & students) than it is widespread. Some teachers have really embraced teaching character strengths, etc. and have seen remarkable results with their students. Others are more resistant."*
- *"Reduce negative behaviors, child and parent preventative care."*
- *"Safe school ambassadors helps support character development through awareness and reduction in negative behaviors."*
- *"Somewhat successful."*
- *"Student, Staff, Administrative and community buy-in."*
- *"Students standing up for each other."*
- *"Through our Safe Schools Healthy Students grant initiative we saw much success with kids who received services."*
- *"We do offer some character development embedded in some of our curriculum. Character development at the high school level is difficult due to the fact that a majority of personalities are quite set."*
- *"We have community service as a graduation requirement. This helps with the character development aspect of our curriculum."*
- *"We have little or no bullying."*
- *"We have observed a reduction in behavior referrals."*
- *"We have reduced fighting, failing grades and citations for drugs/alcohol. Our graduation rate is among the highest in the state. The school also has a great tradition of service to others through student council activities, Make-A-Wish donations and other events."*
- *"We love the ABCs of Behavior.*
- *"Where it has been implemented it has help students."*
- *"Where we see the most success is where the character development is reinforced across multiple classrooms and in different contexts."*

11) What questions or comments do you have, if any?

- *"How can WY come together to make training and resources more accessible?"*

- *"I don't know if I have questions, so much as comments. I hope the Department of Education is seriously considering making Character Education a priority in our schools. Until it becomes important, I think our schools will always pick academics over character education. I'm not saying that Character Education should have equal time and money, but it needs to have some time and some money. The good news about Character Education is that a little bit (especially if it is a building priority) goes a long way. The research is out there that proves that these types of programs can have an enormous impact on student well-being and academic success. I hope that this survey was requested because the state is seriously considering this."*

- *"Is there funding available to bring quality assemblies into our school that would reinforce positive character?"*

- *"No questions."*

- *"None."*

- *"None."*

- *"This survey does not separate out for district answers. I answered yes to all questions but not all schools do each thing asked."*

- *"Why doesn't our district have elementary counselors? If we were truly proactive, teaching soft skills and appropriate behavior management should begin in the earliest years of education."*

- *"Will there be a statewide character education program, or just the mandate that a school adopts one? I take, by this survey, that that's coming down the pipe..."*

- *"Would WDE fund training for staff during the school year?"*